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A RECTOR'S REPLY

TO SUNDRY REQUESTS AND DEMANDS

FOR

A POLITICAL SERMON;

PREACHED IN CHRIST CHURCH, FIFTH AVENUE, N.Y.

BY

REV. F. C. EWER,

ON THE MORNING OF THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1864; AND
REPEATED BY REQUEST ON THE EVENING OF THE SUBSEQUENT SUNDAY.

"If thou art a Christian, no earthly city is thine."—S. CHRYSOSTOM.

New-York:

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SERMON:

A PROTEST AGAINST POLITICAL PREACHING.

"The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

—II Peter, III, 10th v.

IN view of the recent events at Mobile and Atlanta, the Government of the United States, under the promptings of an humbled and God-recognizing heart, has called upon us to assemble this day in our several houses of worship, and pour forth thanksgivings to the Throne of Heaven for the successes with which the Only Giver of Victory hath crowned our fleets and arms. In the spirit of the Catholic Church, whenever she is thus called upon by "the Powers that be," we have obeyed the proclamation, have met and uttered our thanksgivings to God. That solemn act of worship over, the preacher speaks for a brief while God's word to the people.

If we step to the doors of the quiet sanctuary and look abroad, all is turmoil. The whole surface of the ocean of earthly affairs outside is white with seething. And upon the wild turbulence men toss in anxious dread of what may happen. Never, since our country took existence in

the womb of colonial time, was there a crisis so momentous; momentous to America, to Europe—momentous to social structure and to man. A people, a country, a government, I had almost said a social structure, never issues from a stupendous turmoil with the same aspect in which it entered it. And every turmoil has its critical, culminating hour. In this presidential contest we are in the mighty throes of a new birth of time. Whichever way the election goes, one thing seems evident; we are upon the threshold either of peace and such a glory, intellectual, political, social, artistic, pecuniary and governmental, as the world little anticipates; or, on the other hand, of an anarchy which will put History to the blush as she writes of it, and a downfall which will make the world tremble.

It is not strange, that, under so extensive and sweeping a tornado as this, all things, even the Church herself, should be ready to bow before the driving blast. It is not strange that from without, men terrible in their earnestness—men trembling with passion—men whose whole souls heave with the momentousness of the hour and of the issue, should close round about their Holy Church and call in deep, firm undertones for Her to speak. When the soul of a man, thus stirred to its very depths by the sober threatenings of the day, rises with such a demand, its exalted emotions have an element of grandeur and command my profound respect. I can well understand how men, moved rarely, if ever so thoroughly before by the conviction that those who differ will, if successful, plunge all our hopes as a country—as a people into ruin, I can well understand how men, craving with

earnestness unutterable the triumph of the right, should feel that every possible engine should be rolled out at the critical moment lest failure should result ; and, should burn with unspeakable desire, when they enter the House of God, to hear their spiritual guide and master utter the dictates of Heaven itself, to give them refreshment and new power, and to confound their adversaries. The depth and thoroughness of such a conviction I admire. It feels that its view is so broad and surely correct that it must be the view of God Himself.

When the fondest earthly hopes of men seem to hang upon a balance, when all their anxieties for country, for property, for family are so justly aroused, and their passions are so universally inflamed, when a political canvass widens and deepens beyond all precedent till it comes to embrace the fate of all that man holds dear on earth, and, in the fundamental nature of the principles which are involved, stands out separate from its fellows and forms a class by itself, it is not a time for the pastor to rest satisfied that former decisions on political preaching need no review, or to leap to the conclusion that what applies to ordinary times must necessarily apply to extraordinary ; it is not a time for him to close his eyes and ears and float stolid through the great storm, but it is for him to come to an understanding of the hour ; and prayerfully, and with solemn sense of his responsibility, first to God and then to his flock, and with that calmness, that deliberateness and that earnest reflection which the sedateness of the hour and the importance of any step he may take, both in its immediate consequences and as a precedent, demand,

review the question in all its bearings, whether (whatever may have been his duty in the past) it is not now at least his duty to answer the call so solemnly made and speak upon the issues of the day.

Brethren, during the past week I have summoned the whole matter in review before my mind. I have brought every old argument in favor of reticence on questions political to the test of the present crisis. I have done it prayerfully. And although my sympathies, which I may well call passionate in their warmth, and my thorough convictions are with one side in this contest, and although my temperament would lead me to hearty coöperation with that side, yet my duty to you as a pastor in the premises, cleared of clouds by prayer, is once more as plain to me as the sun in the heavens.

I have not time this morning to lay before you all the reasons that impel me to insist upon preserving, even through this crisis, the silence in matters political, which, so far as an ardent temperament and strong convictions would permit, I have in the past endeavored to keep. I deem this however a fitting occasion to give you at least a few of those reasons.

I. I may say, in the first place, that it has been suggested to me, that I should pursue the course of silence for the sake of harmony. Indeed it has been my aim with the help of God, so to bind you parochially together that this Parish shall at last stand as a strong man in the armies of the Lord. And in matters indifferent policy may well, nay ought to be considered and acted upon to such end. But this is not a matter indifferent. It strikes at the very bot-

tom of the vital distinction between things temporal and things spiritual; to slay which distinction is to endow this continent with a European confusion of fifteen centuries, and to stab at the heart of true freedom. There is no tyranny to be compared with that which crushes the souls of men, when the Church has armed herself with the weapons of Earth to advance interests she believes to be eternal, or when the State has prostituted the power of the Church to its temporal ends. And I desire to say once and for all, that I scorn such a suggestion. I scorn the motive of mere policy when such interests are at stake. And I know I shall have the sympathy of every good, true man when I say, that if a certain course in this pulpit was to me clearly right—if for instance anything was abroad, which the Bible and the Church authoritatively declare to be a great sin—I should pursue that course, I should preach against that sin, even though it should rend the Parish into fragments. For while I detest that unwarrantable mutual intermeddling of Church and State which leads but to confusion and retards the progress of man, (for man has progressed and will progress in spite of it) I yet recognize that every great community yearning to attain the true and the absolute carries in its bosom the elements of war; and that there is no advance except through struggle and turmoil. It is not then that dead calm which comes from hushing the lips that would utter the true and the absolute—it is not that resulting stagnation that is the world's want; but it is that the great battles through which the world advances may be fought out on their true fields, and that

no additional unnecessary confusion be thrown in by the intermeddling of incongruous allies. No, there is a deeper, truer reason than policy, that lies as the basis of silence touching matters purely political.

II. I am asked to charge upon the congregation their religious duty in this crisis. What can this mean? Surely not that I should tell them over the common places of keeping passion within bounds, of loving their enemies, of rendering unto no man evil for evil, of preserving serenity of heart under any event, and of the duty of repentance, to which the storms of God call us. All this I have told you again and again. But if it means anything, it means something new—something more. It means something relevant to the crisis as a crisis. It means that I shall as a Pastor indicate and solemnly press the duty of that particular action in the canvass, which shall in the opinion of those who have made the request tend to the salvation of the country. It is that I should indicate, not in my capacity as a citizen but in my capacity as a priest and pastor, the manner in which, *as a religious duty*, you should all vote at the coming election. That is the request in its last intent. Stripped of circumlocution that, it seems to me, is what it really amounts to.

“The earth and *the works that are therein*”—all temporal governments, all structures of society—“shall be burned up.” The very first consideration I laid before myself was this: Does what may truly be called the awfulness of this earthly crisis, the gigantic political and governmental, and even social issues that are at stake, bear a man’s political action at the coming ballot-box up into

the lofty attitude of a religious question, so that the principles of revelation as explained by the Church must be brought to bear to decide it? If so, I must speak. As a priest and rector I am ordained of God, and placed over my flock, not to tell them how to save anything that shall be burned up and disappear—any fabric that shall vanish from the consciousness of Eternity as the fabric of a dream. I am placed over them by God to tell them how to save their souls, and not to tell them how to save their country, unless upon the saving of their country hangs the momentous issue of the saving of their souls. Now is the influence which a man shall bring to bear during this canvass, and the vote he shall deposit that he may do all he can towards deciding the issue, is it all one of those vital points on which hangs the salvation of his soul. If so, then, in order to be consistent, it would be necessary for me to expel from the Holy Communion all those of my flock who contumaciously persist in the sin of holding peculiar views touching the issue, which, like any other open sin wilfully persisted in, endangers the salvation. Did the Church of England in 1776 expel from her communion those who were rebels before success gave them the high title of revolutionists? Did she expel the Reverend Doctor, afterwards the Right Reverend Bishop White? No. Has the Church in America expelled from her Holy Communion even those who are in rank rebellion here? No. Would she not throw herself into schism from the Holy Catholic Church, should she refuse Communion with those who would still remain in Communion with that Universal Church elsewhere? Most decidedly.

Would the Church sustain me, would she be right in sustaining me, should I expel from the Holy Altar all such as are not in favor of continuing the present administration in office? not unless my will and the political view I take be without any question the end which God is seeking to bring about. For His will alone is man's law. Do I know that will—do I know that end without any doubt? Do I know which of the three candidates it is His design to place in the next presidential chair? I do not. If the question mounted to such awful importance that the immortal salvation of the soul was involved in it, would He have thus left man in the dark without a revelation upon it? He would not. Then, though I might tell the people, what I have no right to from this place, viz: my poor will unfortified by revelation from God, and, urge them to do it, I cannot come to them and with the credentials of Heaven declare unto them what they *must*, as a religious duty, do at the ballot-box.

III. But the consideration arose, does not God instruct you to tell your people to obey the "Powers that be" over them? There is indeed such a passage in Scripture. Ought you not then, in the present crisis to speak in that connection? No. For, first, there must be something radically wrong in the wide, sweeping, arbitrary meaning which divines now-a-days draw out of that text. When I look over history and find Rome in the sixth century before Christ overthrowing the Powers that were over her, and stepping forth into the glories of the Republic; when I find Athens a few years later expelling the tyrants Hippias and Hipparchus,

and bursting fifty years after into the blaze of the age of Pericles; when I see the Jews tearing down the throne of Antiochus Epiphanes, England hurling Charles I. from his seat, and France Louis XVI.; when I find that thrones that have become obstructions have vanished like phantasms at the lifted finger of nations that would advance, I cannot believe that the Revelation of God's written word will contradict this Revelation of His Providence in History. I cannot believe that the explanation of the text which seems to prevail now-a-days,—so absolute, so arbitrary, so universal in its embrace, so exclusive of all exceptions,—I cannot believe that that explanation which would condemn the Church of England for shaking off at the Reformation the authority of the Pope, who was clearly the "Power that was" over her—that explanation which would condemn our Revolutionary Fathers from throwing off the "Powers that were" over them—that explanation which inhibits any and every people through all time from bringing its government, however vile or godless that government may be, to the solemn bar of its judgment, I cannot believe that such explanation reflects to us the true meaning of the text. • Are we to obey the Powers that may be under any and every possible event? What, shall there be no advance in the world? Shall there never be a bursting of the soul from any tyranny that may be crushing it? Shall one simple-headed king stop the wheels of a great nation from rolling on to a sublime career because he sits the throne—the "power that is"? Is it said, "But it was God's will to put him there?" Aye; but may it not also be God's will, in the

ripeness of time, to overthrow him? Has it not in the past been His will, time and time again, so to do? May it not have been God's will to put that king there for the very purpose of bringing out the character of the people during their efforts at an overthrow? The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. The whole spirit of that celebrated 13th chapter of Romans is that Kings were made for man, not man for Kings. The whole argument, upon which is based the obligation to obey the Powers over us, is founded on this principle. And yet Divines have drawn out of the mere letter of the passage a meaning which crushes and utterly kills out this its very spirit.

Nay, the circumstances of the local church to "every soul" of *which* that mooted passage was addressed, and of Christianity then as a system struggling not only against hostile prejudices, but also in the midst of jealous pagan governments to secure as a first object a foothold on earth, must let out from the passage a narrower, a more fluxing, a more limited meaning than that immobile, all-embracing, inexorable, man-crushing, mind-crushing, world-stopping doctrine which many Divines have drawn out of its mere letter.

The question is not as to whether this is a rebellion; it is not as to whether the Government does not owe it to itself and to the temporal weal of man to put it down; but it is as to whether it is the duty of the Church to interfere as a Church one way or the other. The syllogism of those pulpits which would just now bend this text to their present political purposes is as follows, viz: All

rebellion of whatever name or nature is sin: This is a rebellion: Therefore these people who are in arms against us are rank sinners, and deserve damnation. Can any one doubt that that same syllogism, that same reading of the text, would have been hurled by English political divines against our fathers of the Revolution? And yet can any one doubt now that God falsified such reading by smiling upon the efforts of our fathers to break away from England and found a new Empire? History is a wonderful clarifier of men's views; and now and then so disconcerts pulpit arrogance that one would think it would act in some degree as a teacher of modesty. Nor have the divines that so use the text failed to see how disastrous to the stability of their syllogism is that same American Revolution. And their tortuous efforts to prove it to have been no resistance to the government of England would be laughable were they not too pitiable. In fine, I somewhat question the prudence of trusting to those as guides in matters exegetical who thus use this text, when I perceive them to be the very school which, when their government was in the interest of the South instead of the North, announced the doctrine of the Higher Law, and with puritanic violence defended their own species of rebellion against the "Powers that were."

But not to discuss the abstract meaning of the passage; supposing it not to be local in its intent, supposing it not to be shut up by its context and by its spirit away from universal application, nay, even supposing it to have the very widest and most absolute meaning, ought I then as a pastor to speak from it to my people? I might; but

whatever I could possibly say would be utterly irrelevant to the occasion. For, after all, the very issue of this presidential contest is to decide which of the three nominated powers shall be the "powers to be" over us demanding our obedience.

IV. But then to these *argumenta ad judicium*, a fourth quite as important consideration arose, a personal consideration, the *argumentum ad hominem*.

I said, "I shall have stood at the altar and *prayed* with the words and from the heart of patriotism. I shall have done so too because it was joy to utter thanksgivings for our victories. Shall I be consistent if I do not then go on and preach in the same strain. Supposing even from the above considerations it might seem right for me to keep silence, would it not under this consideration be inconsistent so to do? If I may not preach the dictates of my personal heart, how can I utter the prayer in the sanctuary?"

It is right to address God in the very wishes of our hearts, for He hath told us so to do. And blessed be the Father, He hath promised to answer prayer. But our hearts are fallible; they know not always what the precise means are which shall bring about that end which at bottom they desire. And God would not be a God of wisdom and love if He had promised to answer according to the very terms of our prayers, rigidly according to their mere letter, when in His wisdom, by so doing, He might consciously violate their spirit. Nay, He hath promised to answer prayer unto our good, not unto our harm. And what is or should be the *spirit* of our patriotic prayers—

that deep spirit which underlies their mere terms, their mere letter? It is that God would bless us, and all who are to come after us, by granting us that issue which shall best conduce to our happiness, to the good of our children and of man. God knows best how to pierce through the terms, and answer the spirit of our prayers. The parent prays that God will in a certain way give him larger, deeper faith. The answer comes,—in a manner least looked for, but God answers by stripping him of his property and lifting away a beloved child. Come to me, says God, pray my child, yea, in such terms as the wishes of thy heart dictate, for that is the best thou canst do, and I will perfect those mere terms if they be imperfect, and answer thy real wishes. I will answer thee indeed, in love, in wisdom. I will put my best wisdom for thine, for thou wouldst not have me so adhere to the letter of thy prayer as to do thee harm. Thy real desire is for good; I will give it thee.

The great wish of the Northern heart is the integrity of the country from lakes to gulf—from ocean to ocean; for that, in its terms, the Northern heart feels will best conduce to the happiness of all. Our prayer, therefore, is for that—our thanksgivings are for whatever looks to that.

Now, as a priest, I stand in a double relation. When I turn my back upon the congregation and address God, I become their mouth-piece, their medium, the channel of communication from their hearts to God. I utter the wishes and aspirations and thanksgivings of their hearts. Here the human, the fallible element enters. I speak from the people to God. We may therefore in the sanctuary

pray in what to us is patriotic phrase : for it is the spontaneous utterance of our hearts, and we are commanded by God so to do ; and if the prayer be wrong in its terms, He will substitute His wisdom for ours in answering its spirit.

But on the other hand, when I turn as it were from God to the people to address them, I then become the mouth-piece, the medium, the channel of communication from God to them. As a *preacher*, I express not as before the natural thoughts and wishes of man's fallible heart to God, but I should utter and declare the infallible will of Almighty God to man. If I go beyond and utter anything contrary to it, or not in harmony with it, or speak that for revelation which is not revealed, thank God there is a Church behind me to strip off my surplice and depose me.

Now, in this instance, how can I state with positiveness, what that will of God is in its terms? All I know is, that God's will, since he is a God of love, is to work out in His own wisest way, our best weal. But how know I what the precise terms of the process are by which He will do this? How know you—how know I what God's will is touching the future of this nation, in order that His great purposes may go on to their vast beneficent ends? How know you—how know I, whether unto those ends it may not even be necessary, in the mighty convulsions of time wherethrough new national types of character, of peculiar research, of thought and of action rise unto the good of man, that this nation, dear as it is to us, bound up as there are in it our own and our children's per-

sonal hopes as we think, should yet sink in a sea of blood? Success is glory. But (how little we know!) time and time again, disaster has been glory to man. Once, when the storm of civil war burst in tornado force upon England, as she dashed, straining through time, trembling in every timber, and ready to go to pieces at sea, and her people prayed for union and peace, God held her together—for the good of man. Once again, when her proud fabric springing like an arch from continent to continent was rocking with another civil war, and her people again prayed for union and peace, God sundered her in twain—for the good of man. If I could look into the future with God's eyes, and know infallibly what would be best, I could speak to you as a pastor with authority. I can pray the wishes of our fallible hearts. But as I cannot infallibly know what turn of events to our dear country would be really best as God thinks, best for our children, best for ourselves and for man, if I spoke as a priest, I might presumptuously point to a course, whereby you would actually be resisting God to your ruin. Then as a conclusion (to this *argumentum ad hominem*,) I may rightly pray, but I cannot stand here, the mouth-piece of God and with a "Thus saith the Lord" dictate to you from God how to act in the canvass, and at the ballot-box as a religious duty.

V. I have, first, discussed the question of mere policy; secondly, I have given you the result of my prayerful consideration as to whether this political question involved in its meshes the eternal welfare of the souls entrusted to my charge. I have, thirdly, considered the only possible argument from Scripture that I can conceive of; and,

fourthly, I have considered the argument that seemed to me to rise against myself should I act merely on the light of the three previous conclusions; I now pass, fifthly, to an equally solemn consideration, viz: to the argument which applies to you my dear Brethren, and to your rights.

Ah, beloved, passion is now sweeping the world away. And when his flock seem to have lost their self-possession; there is no time when it is more necessary for the spiritual guide to guard his presence of mind, and hold firmly and steadily the helm. All else is driving before the storm, wet, and rolling and helpless with the wash of its billows. I might indeed, stand here as you have desired, and as a mere man, tell you the passionate yearnings of my heart at this hour, how anxiously I look to Pennsylvania, how I tremble as I consider what may be the consequences of men's acts who differ with me; but then, dear Brethren, this church would lie rolling heavily too in the trough of the general sea.

Consider the consequences of a compliance on my part with such request. Consider it as a precedent establishing the principle of political preaching in this pulpit. Brethren, though I may agree with you to-day, how know you that in the next political crisis I, or the pastor you may have, may not agree with your adversaries? Seek to establish no dangerous rule. O seek not to surrender to your priests the two-edged sword, which is of right your own heritage. I warn you. Preserve as a priceless jewel your political independence of the Church. The sacredness of that independence is founded upon the eternal principle that adultery, that the yoking together of incom-

patible elements, is a primal source of all sin and confusion. I warn you. That the New-England abolition interest should universally prevail is no dearer as an idea to one large class among us, than that the Roman Catholic interest should universally prevail is dear as a doctrine to another large class. And to spread those several interests both would drag the pulpit on to the political field as a power. So it is, Protestantism and Popery, twin sisters. I warn you. In Europe, "in the name of national unity, the Church more than anybody has appealed to the State principle to stifle all dissent. Who more than the Church has called in that formidable auxiliary, the State, against those whom it counted her enemies?"* I warn you. Go not about to drag your Holy Church into prostitution. Go not about to drug her with the political wine, which shall intoxicate her and unfit her for her calm and delicate work. As citizens we are all equal, you and I. And when on that platform of citizenship any one of us—you or I—mount the rostrum, the equality between speaker and audience is not broken. For any one can answer. But here the case is different. When I mount this pulpit the equality is gone. Our evident relative positions here is in harmony with the fact. I speak as priest, you merely sit to listen and can make no answer. I hold you all at a disadvantage; and rightly so, for my normal position is as a priest to declare to you the eternal word of God, to which there can be no answer. If I use this vantage-stand for aught other purpose, I am recreant to you, and to your rights. There is a blasphemous impertinence in a priest either dictating in prayer to God the

* Ernest Renan.

will of His people, or on the other hand, in his ignorance substituting his own crude political notions for the great, hidden, perfect, will of God, and then dictating them as though from God to His people. It is a high crime upon the sacred political freedom of the people, and a daring insult to God Himself. Again I warn you. We see all round about us how sweet fame is. The road to clerical fame, especially in such boiling, passionate, tumultuous times as these, the road to clerical fame is in a political pulpit. Around such a pulpit is it only that the crowds without exception of a Sunday are found to cram the seats. It is a cheap road; it is an easy road. Have a care. Trust not the weaknesses of mediocrity. Open no door to temptation. If a rector preaches politics should he not, in the name of political liberty, in the sacred name of God, be the rather driven from the place he has disgraced, than encouraged and applauded?

I need not indeed say to you who are here from Sunday to Sunday, that I am not of those who stand trembling and hushed before that sentiment which is abroad in the Church, that demands that the sermon shall run in the old respectable, beaten track, that no exciting event of the day shall stir and wake up the pulpit, that the preacher, lest foresooth he become a sensationist, shall ignore the living currents of thought that are flowing now and reproduce only those that ceased to flow in the popular mind centuries ago, that the pulpit shall freeze all its sympathies with the present. Ah, not such was the pattern set us in the early and the later Church. Not such was the pattern set us by sturdy old Latimer, by St. John Chrysostom, by St. Paul, and with reverence

be it said by the great preacher Jesus Himself. On the contrary, I believe from the bottom of my heart that if the pulpit is to be a real power in the present, it must take up its stand where flow the living currents of the present, and cry aloud to those about it the eternal unchanging truths of Christianity. It must charge the phrases of the day, and the thoughts of the hour with those truths. There are many events of the day in which we can so set those truths as to cause them to walk living and fresh before men's eyes. And the Church cannot afford, casting off her old habit, to lose the power and the freshness which such allusions to topics of the day only can give.

But there is a medium in all things; and when the pulpit descends from merely using such topics as handmaids of the eternal truths, to the urging of political ideas it does not freshen but simply debauches itself; and, substituting end for means, tends to perpetuate that state of things which experience has taught the world is only productive of injury both to Church and State. The political pulpit on the one hand, and on the other senates and parliaments and civil tribunals meddling with religions and interfering with the sacred rights of conscience, have been the curse of fifteen centuries, and have been almost the sole cause of wars since the time of Constantine. The eternal principle underlying the text is, that temporal relationships are for earth and shall pass away with it, and that in any of those relationships the soul may fit itself for eternity; that therefore the Church has no authority whatever to dictate touching temporal relationships, how dear or how impolitic soever those relationships may seem to us as citizens. The State has no

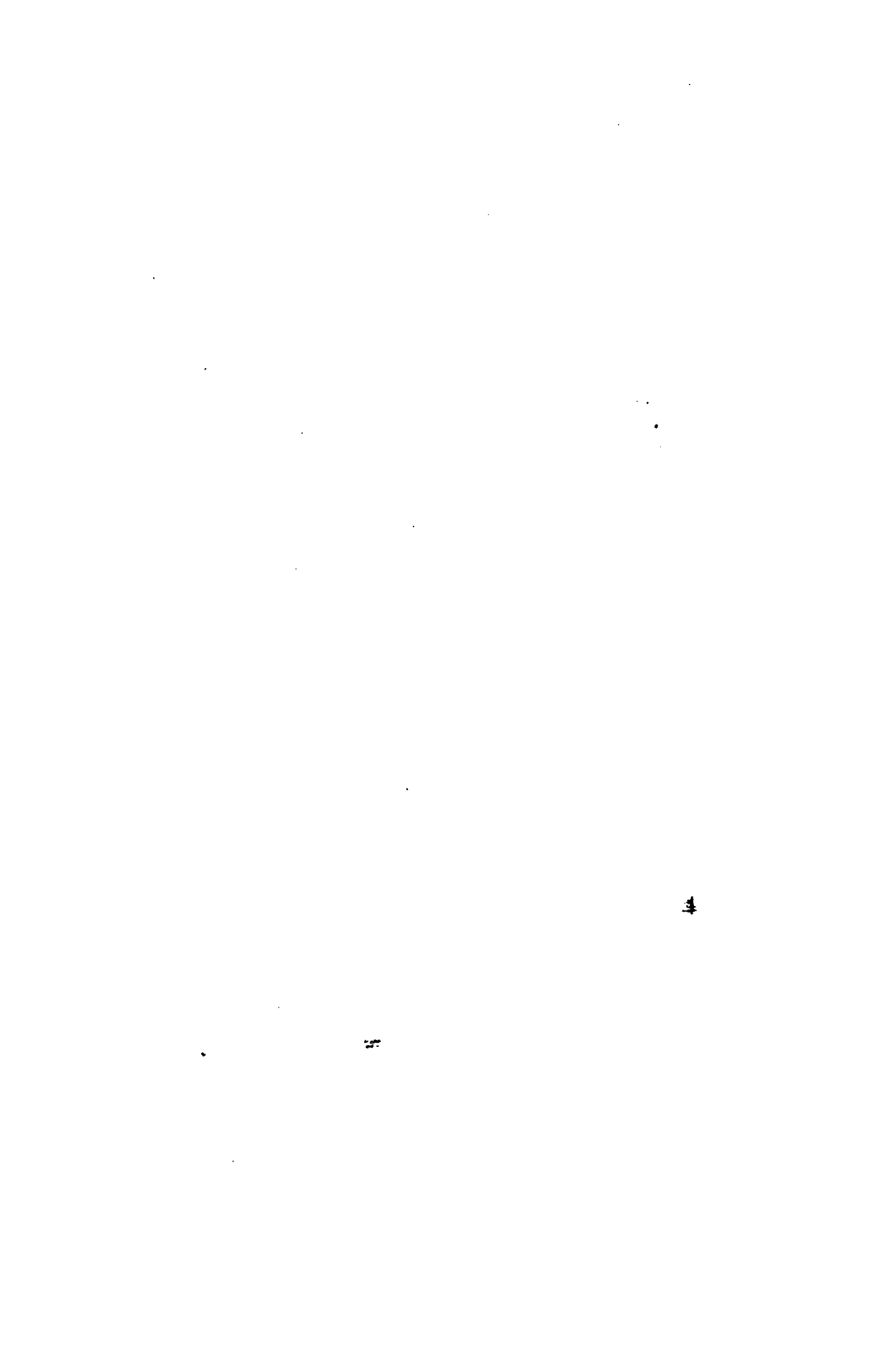
authority over the Church. Each is a creature of the eternal God, the one temporal, the other everlasting, and neither can overwhelm or absorb the other. Marry them together as they are in Europe, or put them together into this horrible adulterous relationship without marriage, which political preachers are striving to bring about in America, and at once there results a conflict as to which shall be master in the house, and which shall "honor and obey." Let Europe and its history be our lesson. Wars perpetual, in which State rose over Church till the Pope became the mere Chaplain of Charlemagne, wars perpetual then till the Emperors became the mere high Sheriffs of Hildebrand, wars again till the Pope shorn once more of his power, sits disconsolate in the Vatican. No, thank God, the two are not married here in America; and so neither has authority to dictate to or call in the aid of the other for its purposes. And as I, as a priest, would resist even to blood any interference of the State in the management of the Church, so will I not attempt to commit that same thing which, *mutatis mutandis*, I would not myself suffer.

To me, much as I applaud that which is untrammelled, that which is fresh, I confess it is one of the saddest sights of degradation in a religious denomination when I see its worshippers carrying their mass meetings straight through Sundays, and invading the very Sanctuary with their unhallowed applause.

VI. And lastly. How long soever an Empire or a republic may last, however splendid may be its career, the word of God reminds us, dear Brethren, that all such, that the Earth and the works therein shall be dissolved

and pass away, and that it is the soul only which is to endure, in its vastness, in its immortality.

Earthly forms and conditions, particularly those which are gigantic and embrace the destinies of generations, press huge and close around the vision, and when they are in danger warm deep instincts and passions into life. They need no factitious aid to rise in their interest. The peril is, not that they shall be neglected by man, but that from their closeness and splendor the temporal shall absorb his attention away from the eternal; or, at best, that their very closeness and splendor shall perpetually mal-adjust in his vision the true relationship which all that is fleeting, however grand it may be, should bear to that great entity, which by its immortality outmeasures in vastness and outweighs in value the entire earth, to that which alone therefore is truly vast, the soul of man. In a wise division of labor, which seems to be the plan of God's Providence for the accomplishment of the finest and best results, it is the great work of the Church perpetually to re-adjust in the estimation of the soul the proportions of these objects which are so liable to be thrown out of proportion. And she is recreant not only to the political rights of man, but recreant to the soul itself, when, forgetting the almost haughty disdain with which the Bible treats the affairs and interests of earthly kingdoms in comparison with those of the soul, she yet casts herself upon that side which shall tend to increase, not restore the mal-adjustment.



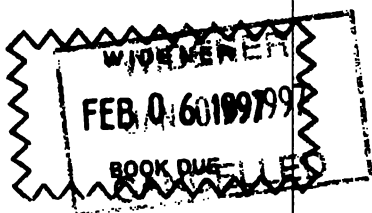


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